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SPECTACULAR LOCATION \$347,900 — 647 Christopher Drive, Port Elgin. Superior quality 3 bdrm home in mint condition on a quiet spacious lot next to a park. Interior has beautiful hardwood floors, gas fireplaces, walk out to large deck with built in hot tub, irrigation system, sand point and large shed and 2 workshops on lower level of the house.



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STUNNING LAKE VIEWS \$519,900 — 35 Saugeen Beach, Saugeen Twp. Spectacular location! 3 bedroom, year round property, with 150' of beach. Open concept with 3 season sunroom, fireplace, one bathroom and plenty of windows. View from every room in the house. Furniture is included. Municipal water with a well. Good septic system with tile bed.



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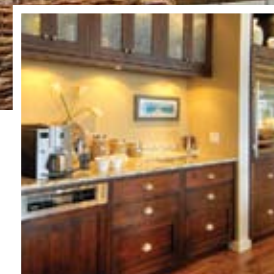
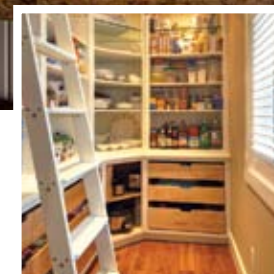
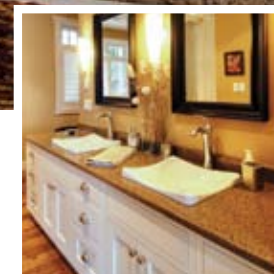
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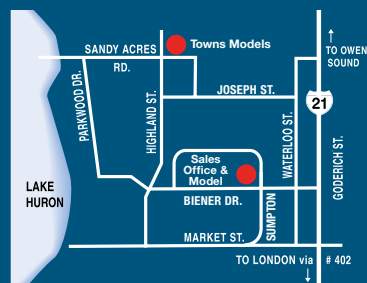
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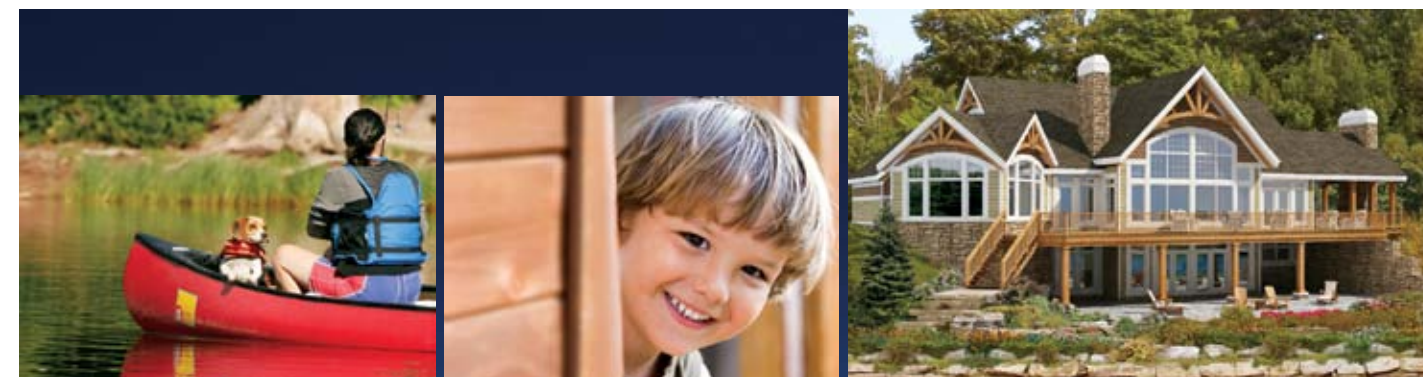


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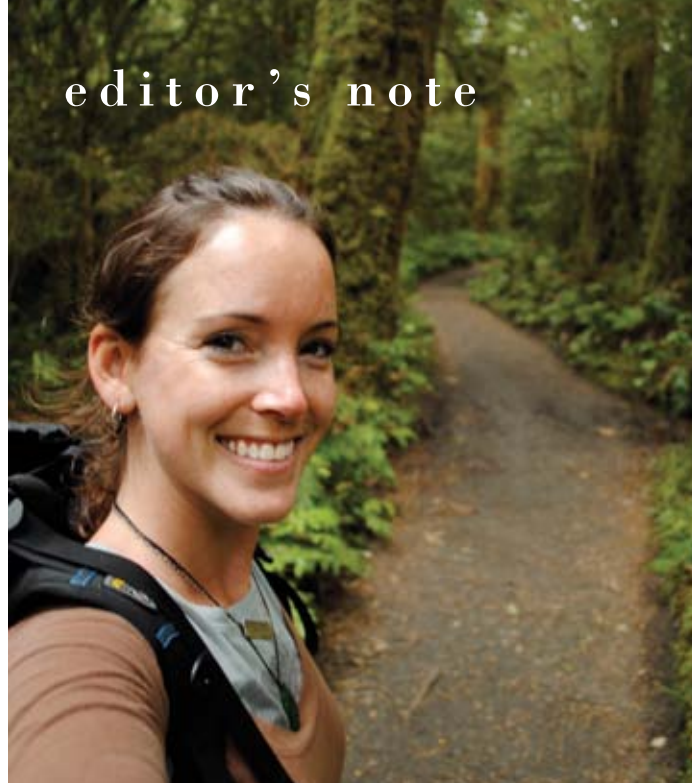
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editor's note



AS I SIT ON THE DOCK AND THE SUN WARMS ME
through the cloudless sky, visions of summer fun flit through my mind.

I'm canoeing with friends on the Bighead, Beaver and Saugeen rivers. I'm eating chip wagon fries and ice cream at Sauble Beach. I'm skipping stones from the shore at MacGregor Point Provincial Park in Port Elgin. I'm hiking to the grotto from our campsite on the Bruce Peninsula. I'm getting caught with a good book in my tent in the rain. I'm enjoying barbecues and picnics with the ones I love. I'm jumping off this very dock into the cool, refreshing water and allowing it to slip past me as I swim to the floating dock.

It's the season that brings out the best in you; the best in Canada; the best in Grey and Bruce.

That's what OUR HOMES is all about. Bringing out the best in this fantastic region by showcasing must-have products (page 16), sensational shops (page 32), stand-out builders (page 36) and, of course, beautiful homes.

In this issue, we feature two fabulous homes by two local builders who know what it takes to make a house a home. Our Home and Builder focuses on Quality Construction Services. Jeff and Sharon Aubrey built their family home with their children. Three out of their four boys work with the couple to design and build homes to accommodate every family's needs, even their own.

Our Feature home was built to perfection by Ben Freeburn of Freeburn Fine Homes and the homeowners wouldn't have it any other way. Their cottage retreat has one of the most relaxing atmospheres and I was hard pressed to walk out the door after the warm welcome the OUR HOMES team received from owners Brenda and Tom Stockie.

I hope you're flipping through these pages on a sunny dock somewhere. Don't worry, we don't mind if you get our pages a little damp after a refreshing swim.

Enjoy the season. It only comes around once a year!

Sincerely,

Samantha Martin

Samantha Martin, Managing Editor
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Functional living
in Walkerton.
Story, page 22.
Photography by
Sandy MacKay.



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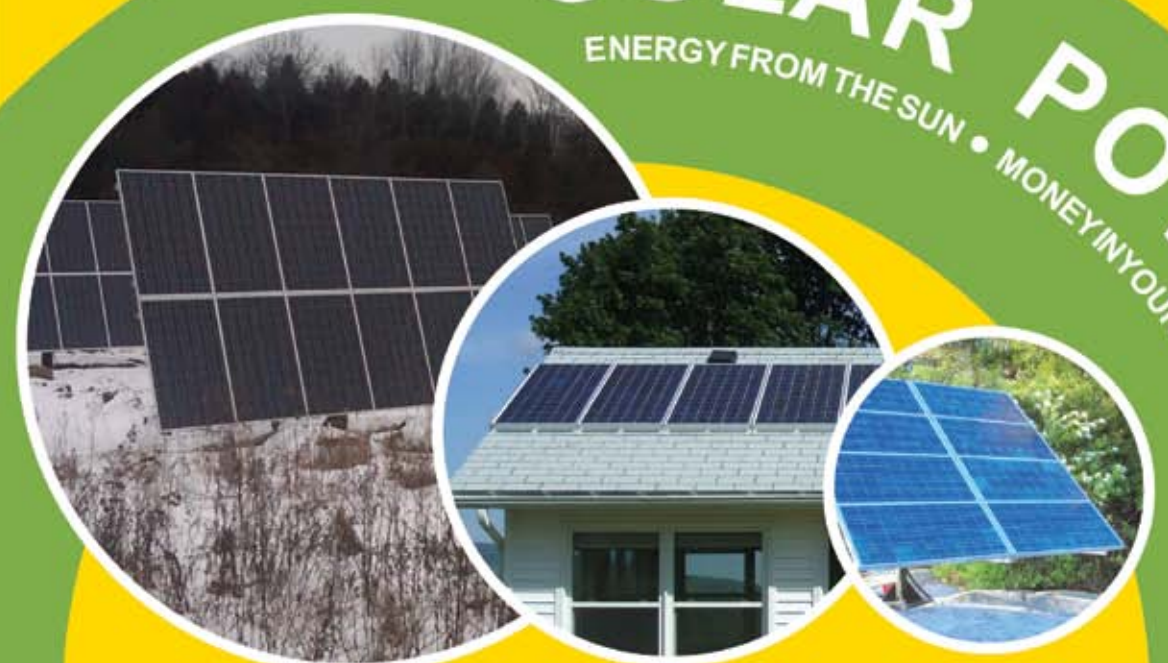
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advice

Designer **Stephanie Redmond** answers your questions.

If you need help, send your questions to stephanie@ourhomesmagazine.com

Dear Stephanie,

I love spending summer on my deck, relaxing on my patio furniture, but my cushions have to be brought in from the rain. What are my options for carefree cushions? Can I treat my existing ones or do I have to buy new ones?

– Sam

Stephanie Redmond replies:

Carefree is a matter of opinion! If your cushions are made of mildew-resistant poly/foam interiors and covered with mildew- and fade-resistant fabric you don't have to bring them in. Sunbrella fabric is the most common outdoor fabric. It's stain resistant, UV-coated and definitely carefree. However, water will still penetrate the interior cushion in a storm. If they do get wet, prop them up sideways in the morning. They drain more easily that way and will be dry when you get home from work.



If you're looking for alternatives, consider ample-sized teak benches with wide slats. These can be comfy without cushions and teak does not require any maintenance at all. This is a truly carefree solution!

Dear Stephanie,

I would like to try creating an accent wall in my living room. Is there a formula? Should I choose a wall the furniture points toward, or one in a less visible location, like behind the couch.

– Marcy

Stephanie Redmond replies:

When it comes to design, creativity is your formula. Go with your instincts. Do you have a wall that you're not quite sure what to do with? Then that's the wall! An accent wall is a very effective way to create change in a room that needs a little updating.

HERE ARE SOME IDEAS FOR ACCENT WALLS:

1. HOT TREND! WALLPAPER: Paper one wall to add interest with texture and pattern. The end result will depend on your paper choice, of course; sophisticated, bold, romantic, trendy. Your options are endless. This works very well as a backdrop.

2. PHOTOS: Photos are a conversation piece and add a personal touch to your space, giving your guests (and you) something to enjoy and learn from. Arrange a dozen or so photos in similar frames of various shapes and sizes. This works well as a sidewall that you can look at up close.

3. COLOUR: Paint one wall in a contrasting tone. This is a cheap and cheerful way to add character to a room and serves as a great focal point.

Dear Stephanie,

We have a wall-to-wall, floor-to-ceiling fireplace in our family room. I have tried many combinations (we have been in our house 36 years) but never felt satisfied with the outcome. My question is how to decorate the fireplace.

– Beverley



Stephanie Redmond replies:

I can see that this has been a long battle! Your space is small and is overwhelmed by the stone on this wall-to-wall fireplace. Let's get rid of it. I suggest doing one of two things, both involving drywall.

MINI BUDGET

1. Drywall the upper section of stone, leaving the wall-to-wall mantel and everything below. Hang a painting or mirror that is larger in scale than the one that is currently hanging and use fat pillar candles instead of tapered candles (they are too thin for the stone and out of scale). This will minimize the heavy stone and allow your living room to finally have four walls.

MEDIUM BUDGET

2. Completely eliminate the existing mantel and drywall from the ceiling to the floor, leaving the raised wall-to-wall hearth exposed. You will have to create a fireplace surround. Use a simple stone (limestone) to match your raised hearth. Make this very simple, square and non-decorative (approximately eight inches wide on all sides and four inches deep). It has to be chunky enough to balance the heavy fireplace. To decorate, stack some logs on the hearth in a low basket and again, hang a painting above.

The existing stone wall is too heavy and has too much texture for the room. Either of these solutions will have you finally breathing a sigh of relief. Good luck! **OH**



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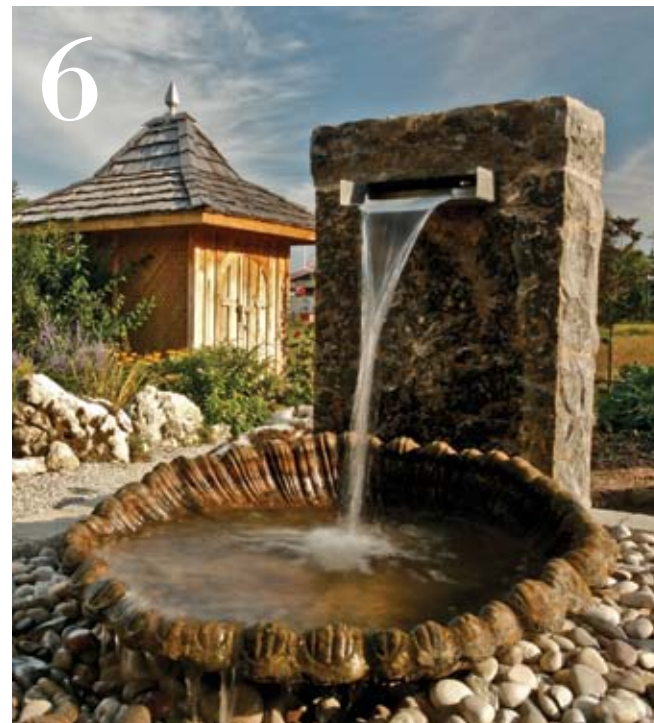
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This spacious bungalow was designed to allow for family members to have time to themselves as well as time together. The downstairs family room is great for relaxing evenings.

ABOVE LEFT: The eat-in kitchen opens onto the generous deck. Surrounded in windows, the space allows for sunlight to warm the kids as they eat breakfast.

ABOVE RIGHT: Preparing meals for a family of nine is no easy feat. Sharon and Jeff designed an easy-working kitchen with space to move around and plenty of storage.



QUALITY

A Family Affair

BY JIM FOX // PHOTOGRAPHY BY SANDY MACKAY

When you meet Jeff and Sharon Aubrey you instantly understand that the couple possesses the warmth and wisdom that being the parents of seven children – four boys and three girls – demands. The knowledge and comfortable confidence that experience provides is conveyed in their conversation about the stunning custom home in Walkerton that their company constructed in a new development overlooking the town centre.

The same care taken with the more than 40 homes that their firm, **Quality Construction Services**, has built over the years is seen in this spacious home, possessing 3,600 sq. ft. of living space.

Three out of the four boys work for the company, creating a team that is unmatched in heart and true family values. Sharon, who takes care of the company's books and provides inspiration for interior design and decoration, elaborates on her design preference laced throughout the Walkerton home, designed by Darrel Weishar of **Dar-Cad Design**. "The home has a modern look I'd call contemporary, not ultra-modern," she says. "The various living spaces suit people's day-to-day lifestyle."

This perfect balance between form and functionality is seen the

moment you step into the home's large entranceway. "The entrance to a home is the first space that visitors experience," Jeff says, explaining his approach to details that might be easily overlooked. "It should have impact and be functional, as well." The entrance to this home does just that with plenty of closet space, room for a bench and an elegant chandelier descending from an elevated ceiling, all bathed in natural, diffused light shining through a Romanesque transom above the door.

Ascending the oak stairway from the entrance, the landing opens onto a large casual dining room, a kitchen with a dinette area beyond, as well as a great room, enhanced by discreet lighting and a tray ceiling. The subdued lighting in these open spaces nicely complements the warm,

Continued on page 24



earthy colours of the interior walls that set a tone of relaxed comfort. Tying these functional spaces together is four-inch, beech plank flooring in medium brown. The wide opening to the great room is bordered in white accent pillars that continue the mood of elegant modernity established in the foyer.

The dining room, perfect for hosting large gatherings, is flooded with exterior light from the large front window, framed in custom drapery from **Cuneo Interiors** of Walkerton and Hanover, who provided the exquisite window coverings and flooring for the entire home. The space's tray ceiling links it stylistically to the great room a few steps away.

Sharon is thrilled by the functionality of the kitchen. "It's the perfect kitchen to cook in," she says. "Everything is within easy reach and preparing meals is a joy." With its ample, custom maple cabinetry, featuring a wall-length pantry by Daryl Johnson of **Johnson Woodworks** in Walkerton, and its central island topped in Quartz stone for ultimate durability, it is easy to see why Sharon is pleased with this food preparation area. Another feature Sharon likes is the double sink made of an indestructible granite/sand mix. Likewise, the kitchen's easy access to the cosy dinette area and an exterior two-level deck accented by a corner trellis speaks to its functionality for both indoor and outdoor living.

Jeff agrees that the design of the home has the needs of real people in mind. "The main floor is not a full open-concept design, but great for entertaining," he says. "It allows for different groups in separate but adjoining spaces. Overall, the house lends itself to celebrations. It makes room for intimate and large group gatherings at the same time."

Balancing design considerations with functionality is reflected in the spacious master bedroom with its walk-in closet and full en suite bath. It is seen again in the lower floor exercise room that flows into a full bath and adjoining sauna.

"I enjoy working with customers," says Jeff. "With the Internet, clients

are very educated about what they're looking for in a home. Having a good rapport with customers as well as the local trades we work with is key. I think people like our casual, family approach. I'm working on site most days, following each project from start to finish."

When asked what he finds most exciting about homebuilding, Jeff answers immediately. "I love that moment when the land is cleared and we begin construction for the first time," he says. "Beginning a project is the most exciting. At that time, my imagination looks forward to the home's completion." Jeff's joy in creation is seen in the care taken with the details found in this home his family enterprise has built. *Continued on page 26*



OPPOSITE PAGE: The dining room was built to accommodate the busy family and gather the troops for casual dinners together.

LEFT: The great room is made up of a collection of seating. Architectural details in the home add depth and character.

BELOW: A downstairs sauna conveniently opens off of the kids' bathroom and home gym.



home & builder

“From our shared experience, we know what works and what doesn’t,” Sharon says. “There are a lot of details that people don’t consider until after they live in a home for a while,” notes Jeff, outlining some of the practical features the couple’s experience in construction has prompted them to incorporate in this home. “We use only quality products. Here, we’ve included hallways and stairways wider than code as well as insulation beyond code. The home has a reverse osmosis water purifying system with a manifold water distribution system for greater efficiency and

reduced cost. A modulating furnace, direct-vent water heater and low-heat registers along with central air/vac make the home extremely energy-efficient.”

“When we build, we carefully consider everything from design to décor,” says Sharon. The Aubrey team invests the same overall care and consideration into every home they lay their hands on. It’s a true family affair of genuine love and commitment to the business and each and every homeowner. **OH**

The back deck, featuring a corner trellis and views of surrounding farmland, is where the couple unwinds after a busy day making homeowners’ dreams come true.



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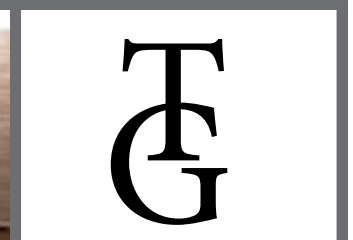
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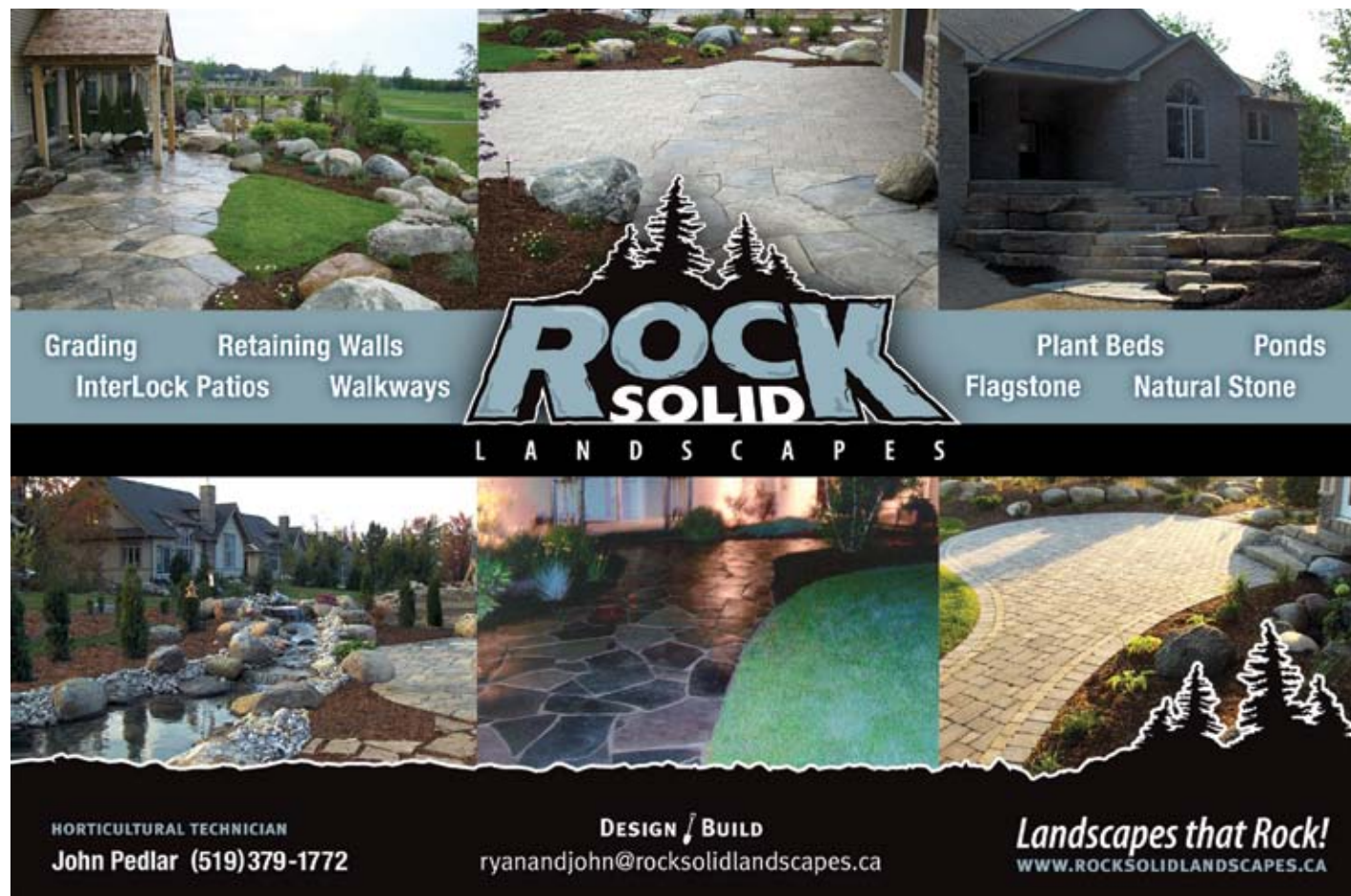
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Confessions OF A CLUTTER BUG

BY PAUL WILSON



Paul Wilson is a writer, editor, and translator who lives full time in rural Ontario. He can be reached at paul@ourhomesmagazine.com.

At our house, far more comes in the door than goes out. In what was once a roomy dwelling of a few thousand square feet – far more than two people really need – I find myself banging into things in the night, things I'd forgotten were there, things that in fact weren't there not that long ago.

This is mainly my fault. I'm a hoarder; my wife, Patricia, is a chucker. If it were up to her, we'd be regulars at the town dump, or the local Goodwill, or the Re-store, and we'd hold a garage sale every long weekend. But as I see it, you never

know when you might find a use for that old sliding door, the boxes of left-over tiles, the chipped chinaware, or the extra set of my mother's ancient dining room chairs. What if our kids suddenly decide to move to a bigger apartment and need more stuff? What if Windsor chairs come back in style? And what's wrong, by the way, with having three saws, four hammers, five caulking guns, and 45 screwdrivers? Nothing like the right tool for the right job, I say.

It helps that Patricia is also an organizer. Using what she calls "sleight of hand," she can magically find a place for everything, making additional pieces of furniture or dishes vanish or blend in with what's already there. I, on the other hand, tend to put my latest acquisitions on the handiest empty, flat surface. As a result, there are no more empty, flat surfaces left in our home.

I used to think hoarding was something that could be remedied with a periodic tidy-up. But as I've discovered, that's as delusional as a problem drinker believing he has only to remain sober for a few days to prove he's not an alcoholic. Sooner rather than later, we return to our old habits.

Naturally, where there is a problem, someone will offer solutions, or sell them. In the United States, professional organizers – people whose job it is to help others like me – have created an entity called the National Study Group on Chronic Disorganization (NSGCD). Their Website, www.nsgcd.org, includes a scary quiz to help you determine if you need help, and how badly. "Has disorganization been a factor in your life for many years?" (Yes, okay, whatever.) "Does your level of disorganization interfere with the quality of your life?" (Now that you mention it...) "Do you suffer from 'fear of filing'?" (No, but I think I've read the book.) "Is it difficult for you to part with things even though they have outlived their usefulness?" (Is the Pope Catholic?)

"Don't panic," the site advises those who, like me, answered three or

more questions positively: "We have solutions." Thankfully, they offer a non-judgemental list of possible causes of chronic disorganization, ranging all the way from poor lighting, lack of storage space, and "too much stuff" to more unsettling possibilities such as traumatic brain injury (TBI), obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), or a fascinating new affliction called "affluenza," which I'm almost certain I don't have. My favourite possible cause, and one that I will readily admit to, is "infomania." Fortunately, we only have dial-up Internet access where we live, so that particular mania remains, for the most part, unsatisfied – unless you count the 30 odd years of old New Yorkers that are currently choking our bookshelves.

Here in Canada, we're not far behind the U.S. in offering help to the organizationally challenged. Professional Organizers in Canada (POC) is a relatively new group (founded in 2002) of around 500 professional organizers who are, well, organized in 14 chapters across the country, seven of which are in Ontario (www.organizersincanada.com). The statistics they offer are rather alarming, unless you are a professional organizer looking for work. A poll they conducted last December told them that 80 per cent of Canadians feel disorganized to some degree. The current president, Kristie Demke, says: "When people have car troubles, they hire a mechanic. When something is wrong with their health they go to a doctor. So it should be natural that when disorganization is making your life less pleasurable, you should hire a Professional Organizer."

If the POC's numbers are even partially accurate, we are probably looking at a new growth industry, one we'll be hearing more and more about in the future. But judging from my own experience, I think the answer to the problem is more likely to be found in the field of abnormal psychology. A former president of the NSGCD put her finger on the root of my problem, at least, when she told the New York Times a few years ago that if someone with serious disorganization problems looks at a row of coffee mugs she (more likely he) will see each mug as a unique item invested with strong memories.

I think she's got that right. To be honest, I have trouble throwing something out not because I think it might come in handy but because it feels like a silent witness to a part of my life, or even my parents' or grandparents' life. Hoarders like me surround themselves with souvenirs of their own history. Deep down, in some primitive recess of our brains, we're afraid that if we throw something out, we'll lose a part of our selves.

Okay, I admit it. It's a serious problem, and it calls for a serious solution. There is such a program. It's called Clutterers Anonymous (www.clutterersanonymous.net). No, I'm not kidding. It treats the affliction of untidiness as an addiction, using a 12-step program borrowed from Alcoholics Anonymous. As a matter of fact, I've just taken the first step. I've admitted that I'm powerless over clutter. Now I just need a higher power to help me sort out the mess. **OH**



SUMMER BREEZE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY BONNIE FOX

THE PLACE: August Skies in Port Elgin is a beautiful and somewhat whimsical shopping destination. From the moment you enter the store and walk along the “boardwalk” of nautical/beach items, past the soothing sounds of the fountain and onwards to the garden area, you know for sure that this store is unique. A tree grows up one beam, stretching its branches onto the ceiling. Bird feeders and wind chimes hang from its branches while outdoor furniture is displayed below.

THE STYLE: The shop is organized into experiences. In one hall,

clocks of every shape and size adorn the walls. The decorating den at the rear of the store is where customers find small furnishings such as lamps, chairs and tables. Artwork hangs throughout, including many original pieces. On the shelves you find serving pieces for entertaining, statues and hand-blown glass. Visit the Sheeler Gallery inside, featuring the art of Peter Sheeler. There are also plenty of one-of-a-kind, locally made wares and a collection of exclusive Canadian-made products. Don’t forget to visit the baby nook or the “pamper yourself” corner. *Continued on page 34*

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SEASONAL: August Skies has introduced a new line of acrylicware for outdoor entertaining. The line includes serving trays, drink dispensers and tumblers that are fun, functional and affordable. "Recycled" and "unbreakable" wine glasses are great for poolside or lakeside entertaining. Browse through items that

reflect the lakeside community, including a ship-wheel table, beach-themed "traveller" mugs and plaques that feature Saugeen Shores, Port Elgin and Southampton. The gourmet section has been expanded to include more "just open the jar" foods for easy summer entertaining.

FAVOURITES: At August Skies, favourite items are those that evoke emotion. You'll laugh after reading a humorous card or napkin and smile when you find a beautiful hand-made gift or a perfect piece for your home.

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Bryan Snyder

COMPANY: Snyder Development

TRADEMARK/SPECIALTY: Custom single family homes

FAVOURITE STYLE OF HOME: Stone bungalow. It serves all ages and is very versatile.

FAVOURITE ROOM IN A HOME: The family room or finished basement because it's used the most. That's pretty much where I spend most of my time.

NO HOME IS COMPLETE WITHOUT... lots of windows and natural light.

Continued on page 36



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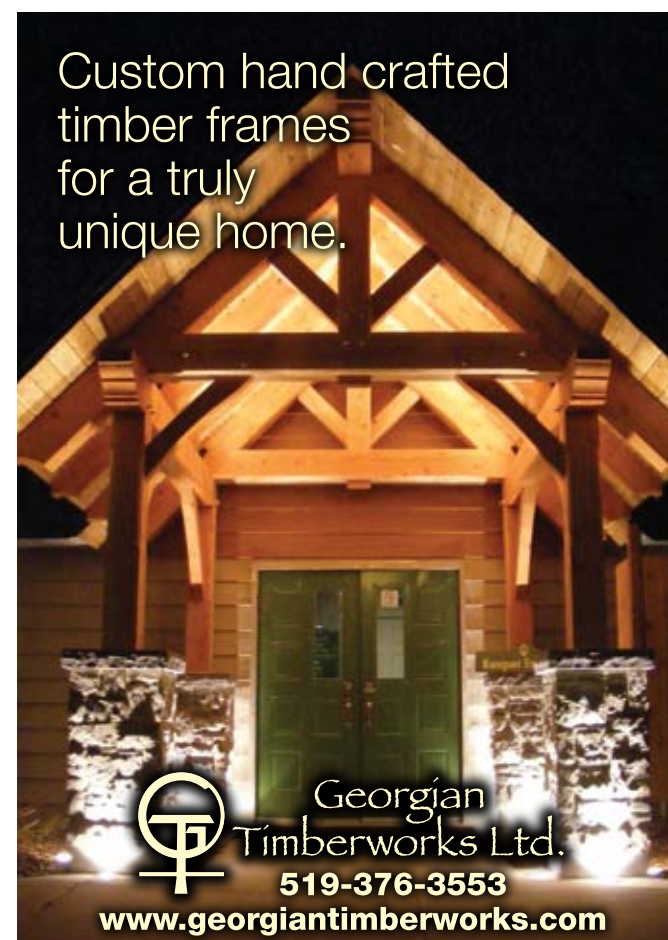
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FAVOURITE ROOM IN A HOME: The great room because that's where everyone gets together for meals and entertainment

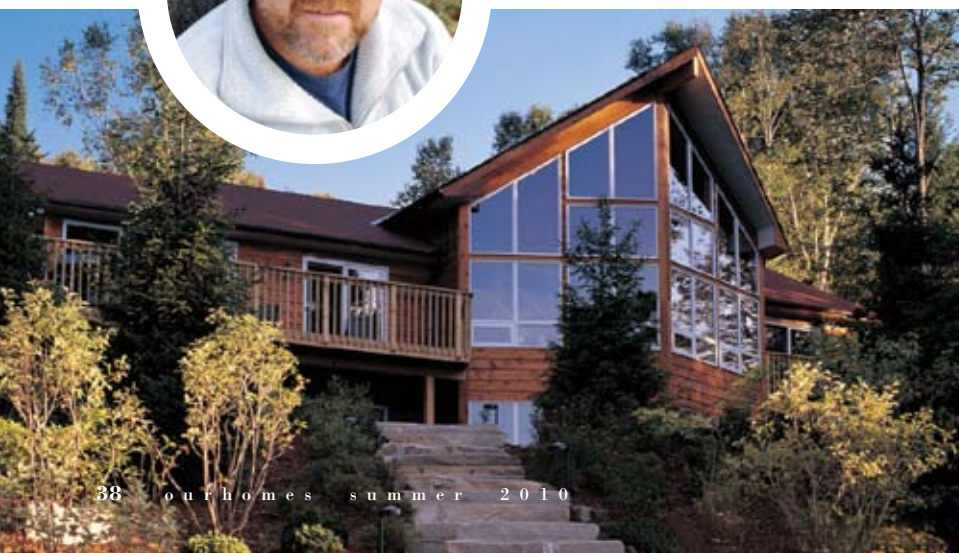
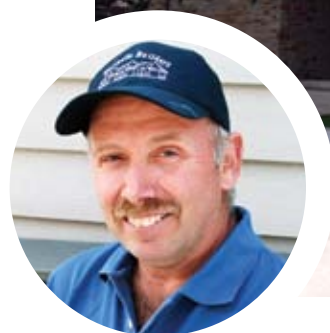
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Cal Westholm

COMPANY: Cal Westholm Builders
TRADEMARK/SPECIALTY: Custom homes, renovations, additions and decks
FAVOURITE STYLE OF HOME: Bungalow. They're more popular now. I think people are just getting tired of stairs.

FAVOURITE ROOM IN A HOME: TV/family room because it's where the family gathers

NO HOME IS COMPLETE WITHOUT... a rec room for a bar and games - pool, ping pong and shuffleboard.



Don Rumsey

COMPANY: Viceroy/Home & Cottage Crafters
TRADEMARK/SPECIALTY: Cottage homes with peaked windows

FAVOURITE STYLE OF HOME: One-and-a-half storey with a loft. It gives more view from the windows.

FAVOURITE ROOM IN A HOME: Kitchen. I like to cook and I think it's a statement in a house.

NO HOME IS COMPLETE WITHOUT... happy owners

Continued on page 38

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Laurens Wit

COMPANY: Laurens Wit Construction

TRADEMARK/SPECIALTY: Quality

FAVOURITE STYLE OF HOME: Homes designed by Greene and Greene architects. Arts and Crafts with a Japanese and Swiss influence.

FAVOURITE ROOM IN A HOME:

Living room. It's somewhere you can relax and enjoy your family.

NO HOME IS COMPLETE

WITHOUT... a well-designed kitchen. It's the heart of the home and means form and function.



Travis Kelly

COMPANY: Kelly Construction

TRADEMARK/SPECIALTY: Log homes and custom carpentry

FAVOURITE STYLE OF HOME:

Timber frame or log homes. You can go from modern rustic to rustic. I can use my imagination and build green.

FAVOURITE ROOM IN A HOME:

The great room.

It's where our friends and family gather. It's inviting with warmth from the fireplace, timbers, stone and lighting.

NO HOME IS COMPLETE WITHOUT... a main focal point, such as bold accents using timbers or custom railings. It gives a home warmth and character.



Chris Vokes

COMPANY: Vokes Construction Ltd.

TRADEMARK/SPECIALTY: Custom built homes and renovations

FAVOURITE STYLE OF HOME: Every home is unique to its owners. Each project has its own interest and challenges. I like the variety of every one I have done.

FAVOURITE ROOM IN A HOME: The kitchen. The kitchen is where families meet first thing in the morning to start their day and where most finish the day with their children doing homework, eating snacks and organizing for the following day.

NO HOME IS COMPLETE WITHOUT... a man cave. We have three kids and a busy house and every dad needs their quiet place. **oh**



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THE SIMPLE LIFE IN *Southampton*

BY SAMANTHA MARTIN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SANDY MACKAY

Brenda and Tom Stockie always envisioned creating a special place in Southampton they could call their own.

When Brenda's parents sold the cottage that had been in the family since 1947, the couple decided to save their weekends of fun in the sun and wandering barefoot on the beach. They designed their own cottage and had it built in the same town as the old one.

"Southampton became our summer stomping grounds," says Brenda. "It was such a safe and beautiful community that, as a child, we could do just about anything: play on the beach, walk and ride bikes to town, never fearing anything. It is full of memories and good times."

Brenda's grandfather built his cottage and ran it as the lifesaving station at the town dock. The building was moved to Beach Road, where it still stands today, and became the family cottage for Brenda's mother, her six siblings and their children.

Tom and Brenda live full-time on a golf course in Port Carling, but weren't ready to give up their blissful getaways to Southampton.

They hired Ben Freeburn of **Freeburn Fine Homes** to build their custom cottage. Brenda's parents hired Freeburn to build their new cottage after selling the old memory maker and couldn't compliment the builder enough. Brenda and Tom knew something good when they saw it and weren't going to let anyone else build their retreat.

"We never looked at anyone else to build," says Brenda. "We saw how Ben worked with my mom and dad. He listens. In our home there were several special features he had never done before, but was willing to try and did an excellent job."

"We talked twice a week during the build," says Tom, walking through the French doors from the back deck into the screened-in porch. "The kind of detail he put into it is pretty spectacular. He created details and features to a higher quality."

Continued on page 44

This custom cottage on a quiet road leading to the lake attracts attention from passersby who appreciate its simple luxury.

BELOW: A plethora of outdoor living spaces allows the homeowners every opportunity to enjoy every hour of the day throughout every season.





The custom crafted country kitchen borrows the raspberry hues from the great room and dining area to blend the spaces.

OPPOSITE PAGE: The Eldorado river rock fireplace perfumes the fresh, evening summer air with the inviting scent of a wood fire. The Stockies have designed their cottage to be as simple and relaxed as their time spent here.

Freeburn felt the positive feedback from the homeowners made for a very pleasant and successful build. “Being thanked for doing a good job just makes everyone happier to be working there and encourages everyone to do their best.”

Brenda says it isn’t unusual to notice people parking on the side of the road to get a prolonged look at the home as they pass by, heading to the shores of Lake Huron. Whether admiring the craftsmanship, the gorgeous wrap-around porch or the blend of cedar beams and sage-brushed Fraser cedar siding that makes up the exterior of the bungalow, locals and visitors take an immediate liking to the home.

The couple originally purchased 16 acres of treed land before selling off three lots. They chose this specific parcel for themselves because the majority of the surrounding property is build-free. Designated as environmentally sensitive, four creeks flow through the surrounding bush, creating a privacy that cottage life requires.

As a bunny hops through the backyard, Brenda and Tom make breakfast and coffee in their open kitchen. An eye-catching cutting board, made by the couple as a hobby-turned-business called **Wood B Nice**, sits atop the oversized island featuring a medley of storage and seating. The

island compliments the rest of the kitchen cabinetry, brushed **Benjamin Moore** raspberry truffle. The same colour spills onto the walls of the great room and dining area, creating a synchronicity and intimate, yet unbarred space for gathering or hunkering down for the weekend.

The Eldorado river rock fireplace (**Stone Parlour & Art Gallery** in Tiverton), with its barn board mantel (**Timeless Materials North**), in the great room adds to the authentic cottage feel. “It’s a main design feature on the inside and the stone chimney looks good on the outside,” says Freeburn. “It gives a bit of variety to the wood siding exterior and accents the cedar.”

Pine ceilings are accented with Muskoka beams, adding depth and an aged cottage look to the open space. Scraps from these beams are used to create the cutting board masterpieces, linking the cottage with their Muskoka home and their side business. Wide plank pine floors anchor the space and are complemented by pine furniture, custom-made pine trim and the warm glow of candlelight. A wall of sliding doors (**Strassburger Windows and Doors**), four in total, allow for abundant natural light and lead to the heated porch, where an outdoor dining table and barbecue await company.

Down a hallway, designed for maximum storage with a wall of cupboards holding everything from linens to shelves upon shelves of

Continued on page 46



feature

LEFT: Family wedding photos from last summer hold prominent placement at the cottage, where the couple's growing family visits to unwind.

RIGHT: The master suite exudes classic simplicity. French doors open onto the screened-in porch, extending the space for lazy summer mornings.



candles (Brenda loves candles), is the master bedroom, clad in a subtle corn silk yellow with black, white and cream accents. French doors open onto the screened-in porch where two cushioned loungers and a love seat await steaming morning coffee or a good book on a rainy afternoon. Music flows into this space from the home and onwards onto the deck.

The master en suite resembles a true cottage cabin with pine, board and batten walls and a claw-foot tub in black and white (**John Bridge Plumbing and Heating** in Tara). A grand mirror (**Star Glass Service** in Allenford) spans the length of the his-and-her vanity and a slate mosaic tile shower (**Warton Home Décor Centre**) in marbled black washes the sand away after a day down by the lighthouse. The infrared lamp above warms and dries refreshed skin once out of the shower.

Checkered red and white bed linens in the spare room down the hall suggest a country picnic. A laundry room and three-piece bathroom also find convenient homes on the main floor of this cottage. Downstairs is a welcome escape from the mid-summer heat. The cool, finished basement (three-quarter-inch maple hardwood flooring by **South Bruce Flooring**) features a living room, bathroom, workshop (a second workshop is located in the two-car garage; **Ontrack Door Systems Inc.** in Owen Sound) and two guest bedrooms for the blended family.

“We wanted this place to be a livable place,” says Brenda. “We didn’t do anything extravagant. Everything’s pretty basic: we wanted people to feel welcome.”

“It’s very simple,” adds Tom. “For us, it’s how you live. Our goal is to simplify our lives.”

And Southampton is where they will be keeping it simple for years to come. **OH**



A country cottage guest bedroom on the main floor is one of three guest rooms where friends and family can enjoy the fresh Lake Huron breeze.

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CEDAR PLANK SALMON

BY MARIA DASILVA // PHOTOGRAPHY BY SCOTT HUNTER



Canada's coastal First Nations people have used cedar planks for cooking (among other uses) for centuries. On a backyard grill this technique yields delightfully delicious results, perfect for a casual dinner on the deck with friends. The salmon soaks up a light woodsy, smoky taste from the cedar while the maple mustard glaze adds a subtle sweetness. What better way to celebrate Canada Day than with some traditional flavours and ingredients of our great nation?

CEDAR PLANK SALMON: (Serves 4)

3 tbsp maple syrup

2 tbsp grainy Dijon mustard

1 tsp lemon zest

1/2 tsp dried thyme leaves

1 1/2 lb centre-cut salmon fillet

salt and pepper

TO PREPARE:

- Mix together maple syrup, mustard, lemon zest and thyme; set aside.
- Trim any skinny edges from salmon. Place skin side down on soaked cedar plank. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Brush all over with maple syrup mixture.
- Place plank on grill over medium-high heat. Close lid and grill until salmon flakes easily, 15 to 18 minutes depending on thickness. Transfer plank to cooling rack. Let cool for 5 minutes before serving.

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL CEDAR PLANK SALMON:

- Soak cedar plank for at least two hours before using. While the wood will burn on the bottom and around the edges, soaking slows this and prevents the plank from going up in flames entirely.
- Choose thick (at least one-inch) centre-cut salmon fillets for best results. The uniform thickness of centre-cut fillets from end to end means even cooking and moist tender salmon with every bite. If you can't find a centre-cut fillet, fold the skinny end (the tail end) under itself to match the thickness at the other end.
- Because the salmon is not directly on the heat source it takes a little longer to cook, about 10 to 12 minutes per inch of flesh. Salmon is done to perfection when the flesh yields a little to gentle pressure or flakes easily.
- Have a cooling rack ready to transfer the fish to when done. The bottom of the plank is red-hot and likely still smoking. Let the salmon cool on the plank for five minutes (outside, unless you want the smoke detector blaring!) before serving. **OH**

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Here's Looking at You

STORY & PHOTOGRAPHY BY WALTER FRANCZYK

A little patience and some careful work breathes new life into old windows.

Chris Johnston preserves the past by giving discarded, wooden window frames a new future as decorative mirrors. As a painter, he was already an expert on wood finishing, when a good friend, who had a barn full of old windows from a nearly-century-old house and outbuildings in Northern Ontario, offered the frames to him. Johnston eagerly accepted. "I hate to see them thrown in the dump," he says. When the friend passed away, Johnston made his friend's widow a mirror from a window from the couple's old home. Since then he has made preserving a piece of the past a pleasurable habit.

HERE'S HOW IT WORKS.

MATERIALS

Sandpaper or orbital sander
Scraper (for digging paint out of corners)
Paint stripper
Wire Brush
Paint Brush
Stain Urethane, paint or oil (to finish the frame)
Window glazing points (to hold your mirror in place)
Wire (to mount your project on the wall)

STEP 1

Remove old putty from the frame and diamond-shaped glazing points that help hold the glass. Sometimes, you'll have to break the glass to get it out of the frame.

STEP 2

Scrap and sand the old paint off the window frame. Sometimes, paint stripper is necessary. If there is no paint on the frame, scrape off the rough, weathered wood. If you're going to paint the frame, it's not necessary to remove all the old paint. Take care with older windows because old paint may contain lead. It's best to wear a mask while sanding and do it outside. Cleaning the old frame can be the most challenging part of the project. Scraping and sanding the inside edges of the window frame can take a long time.

STEP 3

Window mirrors can be left without a finish or simply covered with a coat of urethane. If you're staining them, apply a finish coat of urethane over your stain. Another option is to finish the frame with linseed oil or tung oil.

STEP 4

Once the frame is finished, mirrors can be installed. You can find a large, old mirror in a thrift shop and have it cut in a glass shop to fit your frame, or you can buy a new mirror, perhaps a tinted one, and have it cut to size. Insert window glazing points to hold the mirrors in place. Finish your mirror window by installing picture wire on the back. Then choose a spot for it that will best reflect your work. **OH**



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